

CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)

- A. Definition: The Vocational Rehabilitation Act, as amended, establishes a Client Assistance Program (CAP) in each state. It is required to be independent of the state VR agency. It is established to provide assistance in informing and advising all applicants and clients of the available benefits under the VR Act, and to assist them in pursuing legal, administrative, or other appropriate remedies to ensure the protection of their rights.

The Governor of Iowa has designated the Iowa Commission of Persons With Disabilities in the Department of Human Rights to be the CAP agency for both IVRS and the Department for the Blind.

- B. Nature and Scope of CAP Services: The purpose of CAP is to assist persons in their attempt to receive VR services to be treated fairly and equitably.

CAP services are authorized only for applicants and clients seeking or receiving services under the Rehabilitation Act. This includes persons who are dissatisfied with the provision or denial of services and those seeking services other than, or in addition to, those being provided.

CAP may advise clients or applicants of benefits available to them through related federal and state assistance programs, but are not authorized to assist in relationships with or pursue remedies with regard to programs and issues which are not rehabilitation programs under the Act.

The CAP director has access to IVRS policy-making and administrative personnel and is authorized to advise IVRS and other agencies of identified problem areas in the delivery of rehabilitation services and suggest methods of improving the performance of agencies which provide services under the Act.

- C. IVRS Cooperation: The state agency supports and encourages the activities of the Iowa Client Assistance Program by:
1. providing each client a brochure about ICAP at the time of the initial intake interview;
 2. discussing the ICAP with each new client through its inclusion on form IPE-1 %Applicants Rights and Responsibilities+;
 3. including a statement about ICAP on each IPE initiated with the client;

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4. reviewing ICAP availability with all clients being closed for reasons other than rehabilitation, especially those closed for failure to cooperate, refused services, or for the reason of ineligibility;
5. emphasizing with staff and clients that ICAP is in addition to internal agency appeal procedures; and
6. informing all applicants of the availability of ICAP to counsel and assist them in their appeals.

Counselors may encourage and facilitate clients referring themselves to ICAP. If a counselor is considering a direct referral to ICAP of a client, the counselor shall first discuss this with the immediate supervisor to assure that the referral is appropriate and that it is among the most viable alternatives in terms of satisfactorily resolving the client's concerns.

- D. Information Sharing: No information about an individual client, including name, address, disability, or dispute with the agency, may be given to ICAP either verbally or in writing, without a Release of Information Form (R-407) signed by the client. The signed form is to be incorporated into the client's casefile as an official, permanent document.

Upon receipt of the client's signed Release of Information Form, IVRS will make every effort to facilitate ICAP's review of the casefile information. This may include joint review of the case record in the field with ICAP staff and the counselor and/or supervisor. At ICAP's request, the casefile may be forwarded to the state office designated liaison person, where it will be retained pending ICAP review. If the casefile is in a closed status, ICAP staff may review it at the state office by contacting the designated liaison person.

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